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29 January 1951

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. E. WILKINSON
Assistant to the Joint Secretaries

SUBJECT: Organization for Political Warfare

1. Present Situation.

This country has neither a "political warfare" concept (using the term in its broadest sense), nor the organizational structure to carry out effective political warfare. Sporadic efforts are being made to establish the necessary governmental machinery to handle various aspects of political warfare such as psychological warfare, economic warfare, the whole field of covert operations commonly called "unconventional warfare", etc., but the requirement for pulling all these activities together and integrating them with the overt aspects of political warfare (e.g., the deployment of troops, political speeches in the U.N. and in Congress, economic sanctions of various types, press releases and "leaks", etc.) is apparently not fully understood. Furthermore, the current top-level thinking on unconventional warfare methods as reflected in the various proposed modifications of NSC 10/2 (particularly NSC 10/3, NSC 10/4, the report by the NSC to the JCS on NSC 10/3) indicates a dangerous tendency to (a) fragmentize political warfare into separate organizational structures, and (b) engage in fruitless and entirely unnecessary arguments over the command and control of unconventional warfare operations during national emergency and war.

2. Basic Principles: Regardless of the particular branch or branches of political warfare under discussion certain basic principles will apply. Briefly stated these are:

a. Unified planning and broad operational direction: Studies initiated as part of [] Project emphasize that no single branch of political warfare (such as PW, for example) can be expected to achieve maximum results unless its operations are supported by coordinated operations, both overt and covert, in the other branches of political warfare. These conclusions are borne out by British experience and are reflected in the [] discussions held in Washington on November 1950. The covert operations of CIA must be fully coordinated with the overt actions of both the Departments of State and Defense,

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b. Joint Operations support: Within the Services, support for unconventional warfare operations or secret intelligence activities must be conducted on a joint basis.

c. Controls: Control of special operations and secret intelligence activities in time of the national emergency (declared on December 16, 1950) should be designed to approach as closely as possible the command structure which will go into effect during war.

d. Supports: Regardless of whether CIA or the military have predominant control of unconventional warfare and secret intelligence activities, during periods of national emergency or war the Services will be required to furnish the great preponderance of logistic support and personnel.

e. Calculated Risk: Since the Services are making every effort to have the [] D-day forces trained and deployed by 1 July 1952, there is an understandable sense of urgency on the part of the military regarding the early establishment of the covert organizations required to support the war plan. The military fully appreciates the sensitive nature of covert operations and the complicated political considerations involved in their preparation, but nevertheless is prepared, in view of the explosive nature of the current world situation, to accept a much higher degree of calculated risk (and a reasonable number of abortive operations) during the [] build-up period.

3. Organization for political warfare.

In conformity with the basic principles outlined above, the organizational problem may perhaps best be solved in three phases. The first phase can be implemented within the Department of Defense by agreement among the Joint Secretaries and would be a substantial step forward regardless of the rate or extent of progress toward the theatre or national organization for political warfare.

a. Service organization: The arguments between the CIA and the military over the control of unconventional warfare operations during national emergency and war stem from CIA's concern over the long term political implications of their operations and the military's reluctance to be required to "lie in a bed which they had no part in the making". Basically, as the military must provide the main personnel and logistic support for UW operations they have a justifiable right to be fully advised of the results of these operations and to appraise these results in terms of their contribution to the success of military plans. The Service structure for political warfare must be joint and must be capable of understanding the covert operations well enough to plan for their logistic support both in their covert beginnings and in such overt activities as may result subsequently. In view of these considerations, a joint Service organization patterned along the same lines as the AFSWP is recommended.

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c. National organizations Political warfare cannot be conducted effectively unless all operations, both overt and covert, of the Department of State, the Department of Defense and the CIA are closely coordinated and directed toward common ends. Because of the fluid, opportunistic nature of political warfare, this coordination cannot be fully achieved by broad policy guidance of the SEC type. A solution establishing a Political Warfare Executive reporting direct to the President appears to be indicated. This would require an individual of the highest stature who possessed the complete confidence and personal friendship of the President, operating with a small staff in the Executive Office of the President. From his intimate knowledge of all the President's policies and activities, he would, within the terms of his directive speak for the President in all matters relative to the day-to-day conduct of political warfare in support of national objectives. In the performance of this task, he would, in effect, issue necessary instructions to the Departments of Defense and State and to CIA to carry out their portion of an over-all political warfare program.

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Lt. Col., Infantry

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